

# Thom Gossom, Jr.

“Walk-On is for all those people who’ve ever walked on to anything, who decided they wanted to do something and set their minds to do it. Maybe they were uninvited. Maybe the odds were against them. Maybe they got knocked down, but they got up and they achieved.”

Thom Gossom, Jr.’s barrier shattering story as the first black athlete to graduate from Auburn University is a story of overcoming odds, getting knocked down, and getting back up. His journey begins in segregated Birmingham, Alabama. He dreams of joining the all white Auburn University football team, but in the 1960s no one who looks like him has ever “walked onto a southeastern conference football team and made it.” He “walks on,” and within a year earns a full athletic scholarship. He becomes a three-year starter. But loneliness and isolation plague him throughout his tenure at the University. Being a pioneer is painful. In a university of 20,000 students he is one of less than 100 black students. Upon graduation, he is drafted into the NFL and does not return to his alma mater for 18 years...but the story does not end there.



History beckons again 30 years later when, as the Chair of the Foundation Board, he successfully champions the first ever One Billion Dollar Campaign at Auburn University.

“Thom Gossom’s message to the Montgomery Quarterback Club... was so powerful, it left even politicians scrambling to come up with words to describe it. I want him to run for governor.”

– Nancy Worley, Montgomery Advertiser

“I’ve known Thom Gossom for over a decade as a real go-to guy around Hollywood actors. What a rush to now discover him as a blue chip storyteller of passion, wit and wisdom.”

– Alfre Woodard



## *Speaker, Author, Actor and Communications Consultant*

Gossom took his “Walk-On” message with him other places, including the film and television industry. He has been a member of the Screen Actors Guild since 1983.

Gossom has starred in films including *Fight Club*, *Jeepers Creepers 2* and *Miss Ever’s Boys*. You’ve seen him in top grossing series such as *In The Heat of the Night*, *NYPD Blue*, and *CSI*. Recent television appearances include the Oprah Winfrey Network’s *Love Is...*, and BET’s *The Quad*.

He has written *Walk-On My Reluctant Journey to Integration at Auburn University*, and *The Slice of Life* short story collection. The documentary, *Quiet Courage: The James Curtis Owens Story*, is also written, directed and produced by him.

He and his wife Joyce are owners of Best Gurl, inc. a unique multi-platform company committed to all forms of effective communication.

### **Sought after speaker, Thom Gossom, motivates and inspires audiences.**

#### *The Film of My Life*

- Ever think of your life in three acts?

#### *The Moments of Our Lives*

- What experiences and circumstances made you who you are?

#### *I Never Had an Entourage*

- If you could select the people you surround yourself with, who would you choose?

### **Client List:**



The James Owens Foundation



### **Booking:**

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